

RugMark International eV

RugMark International (RMI) Operating Procedure (OP) Complaints Against RMI Standards

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**Contact for Comments:
standards@rugmark.net**

**For further information and standards downloads:
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RugMark International (RMI) Operating Procedure (OP) Complaints Against RMI Standards

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to describe the procedure for dealing with complaints against RMI standards. A chart illustrating the procedure is found at the end of this document.

The procedure is designed in compliance with all requirements of the ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards.

The term 'Standard' refers to all initiated or finalised projects related to generic and country specific standards.

2. PROCEDURE FOR COMPLAINTS

2.1 Review

On receipt of a complaint from any stakeholder ('body') the Secretariat's designated Complaints Administrator (CA) will confirm receipt to the body making the complaint within 10 days. The CA evaluates whether the complaint is valid and can be accepted into the complaints procedure. A complaint might reasonably be made on the following grounds:

- the determination of a standard not adhering to the OP Development of RMI Standards
- the determination of a standard not adhering to the project description available on the website

A decision about the acceptance of a complaint is made by the CA within 30 days of receipt.

2.2 Acceptance

When a complaint is accepted, information about the acceptance is provided by the CA to the body making the complaint within 10 days. The Secretariat then proceeds to review the relevant Standard as described in the OP Development of RMI Standards.

2.3 Rejection

If a complaint is rejected, the information about the applicable reasons is provided by the CA to the body making the complaint within 10 days. In this case the complaint is abandoned.

2.4 Pursuit

After rejection (see 2.3) the body may choose to pursue the complaint. In this case, the body is expected to amend its complaint in consideration of the reasons for rejection. The amended complaint is submitted to the Secretariat which confirms receipt within 10 days. The CA then makes preparations to refer the complaint to the Standards Committee ('SC') and informs the body about the further steps and timelines. The CA's preparations include requesting additional

information from the body, collating data from other sources and drafting a response to the complaint in the name of the Secretariat. Both the body and the SC receive the amended complaint and the CA's response.

Arrangements are made for the body making the complaint to be present (if requested by the body) or represented (by a SC member or third party) at the meeting of the SC at which the complaint is considered. There are a number of possible outcomes of the review of a complaint by the SC:

- the SC may accept a complaint; in this case a new Project would be carried out by the Secretariat following guidance from the SC as appropriate.
- The SC may reject a complaint; in this case the CA would communicate the reasons for the rejection to the body making the complaint. No further complaint is possible.
- The SC may declare all or part of the Standard against which a complaint is made as invalid and substitute alternate wording or declare the previous version of the Standard as valid.
- The SC may declare that a complaint is valid but that reconsidering the Standard as per the complaint would not affect the application of the Standard in practice; in this case the complaint would be taken into account at the next review of the corresponding Standard.

In any case the body is informed about the decision made by the SC within 10 days. The decision of the SC is final and no further complaint against the decision is possible.

3. INFORMATION

Whenever a Project to review a Standard is initiated as a result of a complaint, the body will be formally notified of the outcome of the Project.

4. DOCUMENTATION

A log of complaints is maintained by the Secretariat including the outcome of each. All records related to a complaint are kept for at least five years. Electronic copies are kept as existing and back-ups are made as often as deemed necessary.

5. REFERENCES

OP Development of RMI Standards